PROPOSAL:  Temporary Easement of Property on Howard Street Between W. Michigan and Stadium Drive

Background

MDOT has obtained funding that is dedicated for the re-design of the Howard Street/Stadium Drive intersection. This intersection is critical for Western Michigan University due to the volume of students, faculty and staff, and campus visitors who access our campus via this intersection. MDOT received the project funding due to the accident counts in this intersection which allowed the project to be initiated due to safety factors.

Both the University and the City of Kalamazoo have an interest in this project and have been engaged with MDOT during the design sessions. As a result, WMU has had input in lane width, safety lights, pedestrian walkways, pedestrian medians, and location of the bus stop. Construction will begin 2019.

In tandem with the intersection design project, the City of Kalamazoo has been engaged in designing a sidewalk to run along the east side of Howard Street between Stadium Drive and W. Michigan. Currently, a sidewalk does not exist along this road stretch on either edge of Howard Street. The placement of the sidewalk in light of the MDOT project is one consideration. The University is also interested in the placement for our student safety when considering proximity to Howard Street’s traffic, the wooded areas and lighting, the topography, and the bridge between main campus and Lawson Arena. WMU has worked collaboratively with the City on the design. The City of Kalamazoo plans on initiating this project in 2019 as well.

In order for the City to obtain funding from MDOT and proceed, it is necessary for WMU to grant a temporary grading easement that allows the work to be done. WMU owns the land on which the sidewalk will be located. The temporary easement is attached for your review.

Recommended Action

It is recommended the Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer be granted authority to negotiate terms and conditions and to enter into agreements as necessary that allow the City of Kalamazoo temporary easement to our property to allow the construction of the sidewalk on the eastern edge of Howard Street between W. Michigan and Stadium Drive.